

from the Air Force on April 30, 1975 at the rank of Captain. Since 1975, Ralph has faithfully worked for the Air Force as a civilian in his former job, achieving his final assignment in 1990 as Chief of the Facility Programming Branch (ANG/CEP).

Mr. Speaker, throughout his career, Ralph Conte has demonstrated a profound commitment to the Air Force, Air National Guard and the Nation. He is a consummate professional whose performance in over 30 years of service has personified those traits of competency and integrity that our Nation has come to expect of its senior civilian leaders. I would like to thank Ralph for his many years of dedicated service and wish he and his family a fulfilling retirement.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO SPRING VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 6, 2006

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the students, faculty and administrators of Spring Valley High School in Las Vegas, Nevada, for their tremendous achievements in educational progress.

Spring Valley High School opened in August 2004 as the first Smaller Learning Communities/Career Academy High School in the State of Nevada. Robert Gerye, principal of Spring Valley High School, developed a unique curriculum and educational design intended to prepare students for higher education while providing opportunities to explore possible career paths. The curriculum design provides an environment in which students can interact more effectively with teachers and administrators. Each grade level is housed in its own wing of the school and assigned an administrator and a counselor who will be with those students throughout their high school years. To further foster educational growth and individualized student attention, every staff member at Spring Valley High School is assigned approximately 20 students to mentor as they advance from 9th to 12th grade. The format establishes a greater level of coordination between teachers in each grade level, increased collaboration with the local post-secondary institutions and rigorous academic standards intended to help students graduate with the preparation necessary to excel in college and in their chosen careers.

Although Spring Valley High School is worthy of recognition for many reasons, I wish to recognize Spring Valley High School today for its tremendous improvement under the standards set by the No Child Left Behind Act. As a brand-new school in the 2004–2005 school year, Spring Valley High School faced many challenges. It was classified on the 2004–2005 Accountability Report as a school which did not demonstrate Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). As a result of Mr. Gerye's tremendous leadership, his faculty's commitment to their goals, and his students' determination to succeed, Spring Valley High School not only met the Adequate Yearly Progress criteria this year, it has been classified in the 2005–2006 Accountability Report as a High Achieving—Growth institution.

The administration, faculty and staff at Spring Valley High School have approached

their goals with discipline and determination and, as a result, they have enhanced both the academic experience and performance of its students. For the incredible contribution they have made to the success of Spring Valley High School, I would like to commend the following individuals: Walt Acra, Larry Adams, Sheila Ali, Lisa Ancona, Carlise Arellano, Rica Arenas, Jennifer Ashford, Joyce Bakkedahl, Teresa Barajas, Phanom Baravong, Ana Barnes, Bianca Bautista, Elaine Beller, Bibi Belloto, Louise Belviso, Christopher Bires, Robert Bloom, Donald Bohm, Christina Bolin, Liana Bolton, Marilee Botos, Shawn Boyle, Charles Branch, Susan Brewer, David Brooks, Elizabeth Brown, Valerie Bugni, Dawn Burns, Antonio Caiati, Paul Campbell, Heather Carroll, Daniel Casel, Charlotte Chapman, Bernard Chase, Holly Chidester, Douglas Clarke, Kathy Clemens, Vaunette Coache, Paulette Coleman, Ann Collum, George Comadena, Melissa Conley, Geraldine Conte, Laurie Daly, Eric DeAnda, Ann Deleuil, Patricia Delfs, Amy DeVaul, Paula Digerolami-Macon, Suzanne Dompierre, Melody Dubois, Anna Eapen, Cindy Eisen, Ann Elandt, Jeanette Engelhart, Diane Epstein, Sarah Federspiel, Karen Florence-Hopkins, LaVanda Ford, William Fouts, Victoria Franklin-Dillon, Thomas Fraiser, Rhonda Fritch, Jennifer Gallegos, Diana Gambino, Anthony Gamboa, Richardo Garcia, Gail Garrett, Dean Gentuso, Michelle Gex, Robert Gillingham, Mamie Glorioso, Michael Gomez, Dennis Goode, Gayane Gulyan, William Hamilton, Sarah Hanes, Yuki Harada-Hart, Christopher Hendley, Edward Henry, Kevin Henry, Connie Hines, Caprice Houston-Bey, Rebecca Hutchings, Linda Idemoto, Lori Jackson, Rebecca Jackson, Tanya Jackson, Steven Jacobson, Jill Jaeger, Charles Janette, Margaret Jeffrey, Susan Jennings, Andrew Jennings, Emily Jensen, Brett Jeross, Shirley Jimenez, Bessie Lee Johnson, Deborah Johnston, Harlan Johnston, Karen Jolivet, Emily Jones, Yvette Kagan, Ethel Keck, Lisa Keith, Heather Kennedy, Lezlie Koepf, Joel Krautstrunk, Morgan Krista!, Susan Kuehl, Denise Lauriano, Monica Lavelle, Wende Lestelle, Robert Leytham, Enrico Litterini, Peter Locatelli, Johnny Macon, Rosette Mare, Kyle Martin, Gary Mayers, Phillip McAlister, Brianne McElroy, Melinda McGill, John McLavy, Jr., Jackson Meeker, Frederick Meyer, Michelle Minggia, Kimberly Moody, Dawn Moore, Robert Murphy, Elonda Murray, Amy Murray, Rachelle Nearn, Jane Newton, Richard Niemczewski, Amy Nugent, Michael O'Brien, Michael Oliver, Serene Oppenheim, Rebecca Pappas, Chrissy Paradiso, Iretta Pearson, Joe Peck, Evan Politi, Debbie Pope, Shannon Powell, Jeffrey Pynter, Dennis Pumphrey, Louis Reale, Efrain Rene, Shirley Reuben, Susan Rheinwald, Tyra Riefler, Roberto Rodriguez, Jeffrey Rubin, Ian Salzman, Adam Sampson, Angelica Sanchez, Elizabeth Sandelin, Daniel Schantol, Christina Schenauer, Nikki Semmelroth, Nicholas Sevano, Paul Shapiro, Susie Shepley, Donald Shumaker, Debbie Simons, Brant Smith, Marion Smith, Jr., Mitchell Sperling, Gregory Stack, John Staples, Heather Stringham, Jen Strobel, Robert Stropky, Jr., Cindy Taylor, Marcus Teal, Jeanine Tegano, Jennifer Tichon, James Tippet, Bonnie Toth, Justin Truitt, Leota Tucker, Travis Underwood, Becky Utchel, Nayelee Villanueva, Clara Virga, Lynn Wentland, Stacey White, Yvette White, Debo-

rah Whitt, Michael Williams, Sabrina Woodruff: Dave Yacubovich, Kenneth Young, Suzanne Ziegler, Emily Zierse, and Lee Zigan.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Robert Gerye and his extraordinary staff at Spring Valley High School for the exceptional progress they have made this year. Their tireless efforts to exceed the achievement standards set by the No Child Left Behind Act have made a profound difference for the students who attend Spring Valley High School. I applaud this outstanding achievement and I look forward to seeing Spring Valley High School and its students continue to excel in our community.

CONGRATULATING HEATHER CROSSMAN

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 6, 2006

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Heather Crossman of North Richland Hills, Texas, on receiving the venerated 2006 Presidential Freedom Scholarship. As a recipient of this prestigious award, she is recognized for her outstanding leadership and commitment to servicing of her community and its residents.

The Presidential Freedom Scholarship program, sponsored by the Corporation for National and Community Service and administered by Learn and Serve America, honors select high school juniors and seniors, displaying exceptional service and citizenship, with a \$1,000 scholarship to the college of their choice. To be eligible for nomination, individuals must have completed at least 100 hours of community service and receive the recommendation of their high school.

Mr. Speaker, I extend my sincere congratulations to Heather Crossman on receiving this award and commend her dedication and desire to help her school, community and country.

TRIBUTE TO THE VIRGILIO LODGE NO. 1586 AND THE BEATRICE PORTINARI LODGE NO. 1626 OF THE ORDER OF SONS OF ITALY ON THEIR 75TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 6, 2006

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to invite my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Virgilio Lodge No. 1586 and the Beatrice Portinari Lodge No. 1626 as they celebrate their Golden Jubilee Gala on September 9, 2006.

The Order of the Sons of Italy in America was established in Vallejo, California, in January of 1931 when one-fourth of the community was composed of Italian Americans. The Sons of Italy is a National Fraternal Order that has lodges throughout the United States and Canada and took out its Charter in 1905 in New York City. They believe in liberty, equality and fraternity.

The lodges have been very active in Vallejo and Solano County including awarding 15 annual scholarships; raising in excess of \$80,000